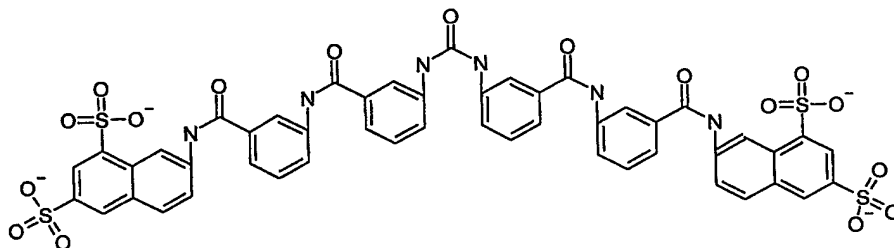
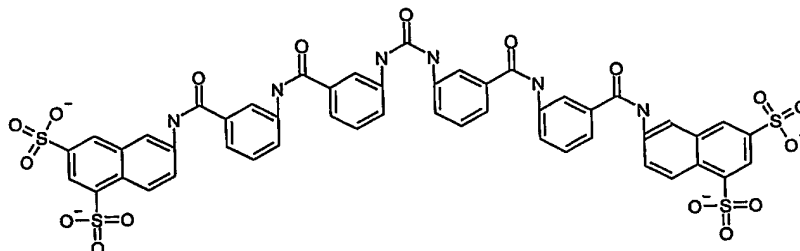


Claims

1. A method of screening a test substance for possession of binding activity for MSP1₄₂ or a fragment thereof, the method comprising the steps of: combining or contacting, in any order,
 - (i) a molecule comprising MSP1₄₂ or a fragment thereof,
 - (ii) the test substance, and
 - (iii) a comparison substance known to have binding activity for MSP1₄₂ or a fragment thereof;and determining the presence and/or amount, if any, of comparison substance and/or test substance bound to the MSP1₄₂ or fragment thereof.
2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the comparison substance inhibits processing of MSP1₄₂ and/or inhibits merozoite invasion of erythrocytes.
3. A method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the comparison substance is suramin or a suramin analogue.
4. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the comparison substance and/or the test substance is labelled to facilitate detection.
5. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the fragment of MSP1₄₂ comprises MSP1₁₉ or MSP1₃₃.
6. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein binding of the comparison and/or test substance is determined by fluorescence measurements.
7. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the test substance is screened against a number of different MSP1₄₂ molecules or fragments thereof.

8. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the MSP₁₄₂ molecule or fragment thereof is a mutant of a naturally-occurring wild type sequence.
9. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the comparison substance comprises a suramin analogue having a m-aminobenzoyl or m'-aminobenzoyl-m-aminobenzoyl moiety.
10. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the comparison substance comprises a suramin analogue which is symmetrical.
11. A method according to claim 9 or 10, wherein the analogue substance comprises suramin analogues C2 and C4 as defined in Table 1 herein, and having the structure shown below:

C2C4

12. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the comparison substance comprises a molecule which exhibits at least a twofold increase in fluorescence upon binding to MSP1₄₂ or a fragment thereof.
13. Use of suramin or an analogue thereof in the preparation of a medicament to treat or prevent malarial disease in a mammalian subject.
14. A pharmaceutical composition comprising suramin or an analogue thereof for use in the prevention and/or treatment of malarial disease in a mammalian subject.
15. A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 10, wherein the active ingredient is identified by performance of a method in accordance with any one of claims 1-12.
16. A method substantially as hereinbefore described and with reference to the accompanying drawings.